

Seeds and Thorns

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. MATTHEW 5:9

Born on 20 May 2002, Timor-Leste is Asia's youngest and poorest nation.

In her long struggle for freedom, her people have lived through great suffering, trauma and violence. The civil unrest of 2006 and the recent assassination attempts on both the President and the Prime Minister are tell-tale signs that all is not well. It is time for national peace and reconciliation. It is time for the people of Timor to experience lasting peace and joy in their lives, in their land.

Peace is fragile. It can be easily shattered. It is destroyed when shots are fired, when stones are thrown, when insults are exchanged.

Peace is a choice. It must be built by the people themselves. Every Timorese must want it and do his part toward peace. Every one must be taught the value of peace, and the necessary skills to make peace and keep peace.

To this end, Transformation Alliance is committed to help foster a culture of peace and reconciliation in Timor. We recognise that this will be a long process. Mindset change takes time. So does behavioural change. Peace and reconciliation which are foundational to national transformation will also take time. That's why we must serve with joyful patience filled with hope.

The Lord has laid upon our hearts a simple community-based peace plan called *Seeds and Thorns*.

We believe that being an agricultural community, the Timorese will have no trouble understanding the concept:

A seed is a wonderful thing

Though it is small, it has the power to come alive.

Different kinds of seeds grow and bear different kinds of fruit. A good seed will grow into something that is useful or delicious, like rice, corn or cassava. But a thorn hurts people and destroys other plants. So we cannot allow seeds and thorns to grow together.

Imagine that your life is a field. Everyday you sow seeds into the field of your life. The seeds are your thoughts and actions. What kind of things are you growing? What will you reap at harvest time? What kinds of seeds must you plant to have peace in your life, your family, community, and nation?

You may not see the results immediately, but the harvest will come one day. What kinds of thorns must you remove? What kinds of thoughts and attitudes will destroy peace?

Let us work together to sow the seeds for peace, and remove the thorns in Timor Leste!

Excerpted from "Seeds and Thorns": Preface of First Draft, May 2008.

PRAYERLINE

■ Declare God's Word over Timor: *I will bring health and healing... and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security... Then this city will bring Me renown, joy, praise and honour before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it.* JEREMIAH

33:6-9 NIV

■ Pray for our ground workers to be filled with faith and fervent love as they implement Seeds and Thorns in their respective communities. Ask God to bless them with favour and fruitfulness.

■ Pray that Seeds and Thorns will be a tool of the Lord to catalyze a movement of peace, reconciliation and transformation in Timor.

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www.loveeasttimor.com